

## Claims

- [c1] 1.A method of automated rail loading of automotive vehicles, said method comprising the steps of:  
attaching tags to the automotive vehicles;  
performing an automated railcar identification; and  
generating an automated load makeup based on the identified railcar and the automotive vehicles; and  
locating the automotive vehicles and loading the automotive vehicles on a railcar specified in the automated load makeup; and  
shipping the automotive vehicles via the railcar to a final destination specified in the automated load makeup.
- [c2] 2.A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said step of performing automated railcar identification comprises scanning an identification number of a railcar.
- [c3] 3.A method as set forth in claim 1 including the step of performing automated automotive vehicle identification.
- [c4] 4.A method as set forth in claim 3 wherein said step of performing automated vehicle identification comprises electronically reading the tags on the automotive vehicles by RF antennas installed in a rail shipping yard.
- [c5] 5.A method as set forth in claim 1 including the step of moving the tagged automotive vehicles to a vehicle release point adjacent to a rail yard.
- [c6] 6.A method as set forth in claim 5 including the step of moving the tagged automotive vehicles in the rail yard.
- [c7] 7.A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said automated load makeup comprises a track spot, railcar number, number of automotive vehicles to be loaded on railcar, and destination route code.
- [c8] 8.A method as set forth in claim 1 including the step of performing a final quality check on the automotive vehicles just prior to loading the automotive vehicles onto the railcar.

- [c9] 9.A method as set forth in claim 1 including the step of removing the attached tags from the automotive vehicles prior to shipping.
- [c10] 10.A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said step of attaching comprises attaching active radio frequency (RF) tags to the automotive vehicles.
- [c11] 11.A computerized method of automated rail loading of automotive vehicles, said method comprising the steps of:  
 attaching tags to the automotive vehicles;  
 performing automated automotive vehicle identification;  
 performing an automated railcar identification;  
 generating an automated load makeup based on the identified railcar and the identified automotive vehicles;  
 locating the automotive vehicles and loading the automotive vehicles on a railcar specified in the automated load makeup; and  
 shipping the automotive vehicles via the railcar to a final destination specified in the automated load makeup.
- [c12] 12.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 wherein said step of performing automated railcar identification comprises scanning an identification number of a railcar.
- [c13] 13.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 wherein said step of performing automated vehicle identification comprises electronically reading the tags on the automotive vehicles by RF antennas installed in a rail shipping yard.
- [c14] 14.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 including the step of moving the tagged automotive vehicles to a vehicle release point adjacent to a rail yard.
- [c15] 15.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 including the step of moving the tagged automotive vehicles in the rail yard.
- [c16] 16.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 wherein said automated load makeup comprises a track spot, railcar number, number of automotive

vehicles to be loaded on railcar, and destination route code.

[c17] 17.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 including the step of performing a final quality check on the automotive vehicles just prior to loading the automotive vehicles onto the railcar.

[c18] 18.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 including the step of removing the attached tags from the automotive vehicles prior to shipping.

[c19] 19.A computerized method as set forth in claim 11 wherein said step of attaching comprises attaching active radio frequency (RF) tags to the automotive vehicles.

[c20] 20.A method of automated rail loading of automotive vehicles, said method comprising the steps of:  
attaching radio frequency (RF) tags to the automotive vehicles;  
moving the tagged automotive vehicles to a vehicle release point adjacent to a rail yard;  
moving the tagged automotive vehicles from the vehicle release point into load lanes in the rail yard;  
performing automated automotive vehicle identification;  
performing an automated railcar identification;  
generating an automated load makeup comprising a track spot, railcar number, number of vehicles to be loaded on railcar, and destination route code based on the identified railcar and the identified automotive vehicles;  
locating the automotive vehicles and loading the automotive vehicles on a railcar specified in the automated load makeup;  
removing the attached tags from the automotive vehicles; and  
shipping the automotive vehicles via the railcar to a final destination specified in the automated load makeup.

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